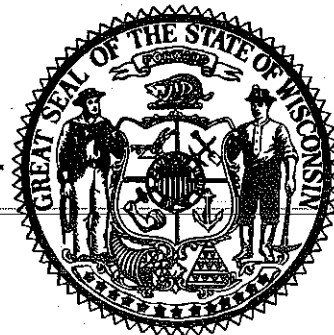


# FRED A. RISSE

## President

### Wisconsin State Senate

March 17, 2010



Senator Lena Taylor, Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance  
Campaign Finance Reform and Housing  
415 South, State Capitol  
HAND DELIVERED

Dear Senator Taylor,

Thank you for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 591. Due to a prior commitment, I am unable to appear in person in support of this legislation.

Current law allows a landlord to terminate the tenancy of a tenant for several reasons including nonpayment of rent, use of property by tenant as a drug or gang house, or a breach of a lease agreement. Additionally, current law allows a tenant to terminate a lease if remaining on the property will cause an imminent threat of physical harm to the individual.

Senate Bill 591 will allow termination of tenancy if a tenant dies while leasing a property. This bill will allow the lease to be terminated 60 days after the landlord receives notice, or becomes otherwise aware of a tenant's death. Senate Bill 591 also provides that a tenant's estate is will not be considered liable for any rent after the termination of the tenancy if the tenant is the only adult tenant of the premises.

Representative Black and I introduced this legislation after hearing from a mutual constituent who was faced with this situation after the untimely passing of her niece. While some landlords are willing to terminate a lease as soon as the decedent's personal items are removed from an apartment, others are not. Without specific language in state law, families struggling with the grief of losing a loved one are burdened with the additional challenge of possible litigation with a landlord.

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 591. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fred", is written over a circular stamp.

FRED A. RISSE  
President  
Wisconsin State Senate

FAR:skb  
CC: Members of Committee